



Successful Adaptation

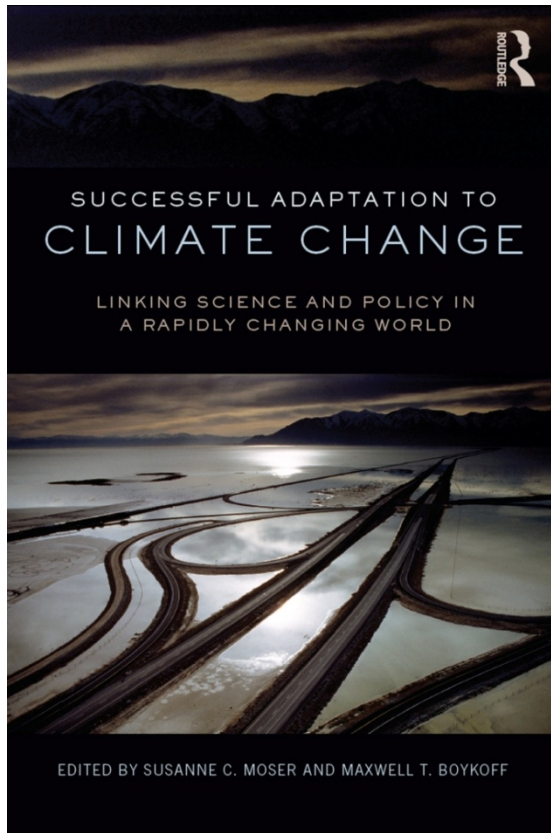
Research • Framework • Communication

Susanne C. Moser, Ph.D.

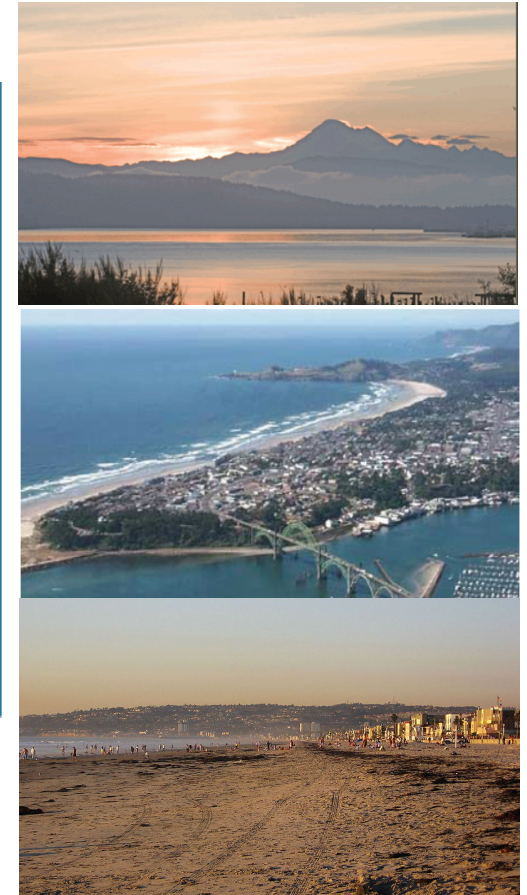
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Stanford University

Background & Origin

Foundation #1



Foundation #2



People Are Eager to Hear About It

- App. 50 presentations on project to ca. 3,700 local, state, federal, tribal-level elected officials, agency staff, managers, utilities, private sector, NGOs, international audiences and researchers
- In California:
 - Presentation to CAT (2013)
 - Presentation at CAF (2014)
 - Visioning with Coastal Leadership Group (2015)
 - Design of SLR Database (A.B. 2516) (2015)
 - Safeguarding California Implementation Collaborative (2015)

Key Reasons to Think About Success

Responsibility for safeguarding people, economy, infrastructure, cultural assets, environment

1. Communication and Public Engagement

- Hope and desirable goal to work towards
- A common vision among diverse stakeholders

2. Deliberate planning and decision-making

- Clear goals, aligning means and ends
- Best fit with other policy goals

3. Justification of adaptation expenditures

4. Accountability/good governance

5. Support for learning, adaptive management



And Good Reasons NOT to Think About Adaptation Success

- Political sensitivities
- Funding sensitivities
- It's work, takes capacity, funding...

("It's too hard" is NOT a good reason!)



What Would Success Mean to YOU?

- Being prepared for the next disaster?
- Being able to cope with emerging CC impacts?
- Bouncing back quickly (effectively, justly...) after a crisis?
- Protecting/preserving the assets under your jurisdiction (as is)?
- Knowing what you should do?
- Implementing the Bay plan in a desired timeframe?
- Avoid growing costs to manage your lands/waters...
- Contributing to a thriving California in 2050?

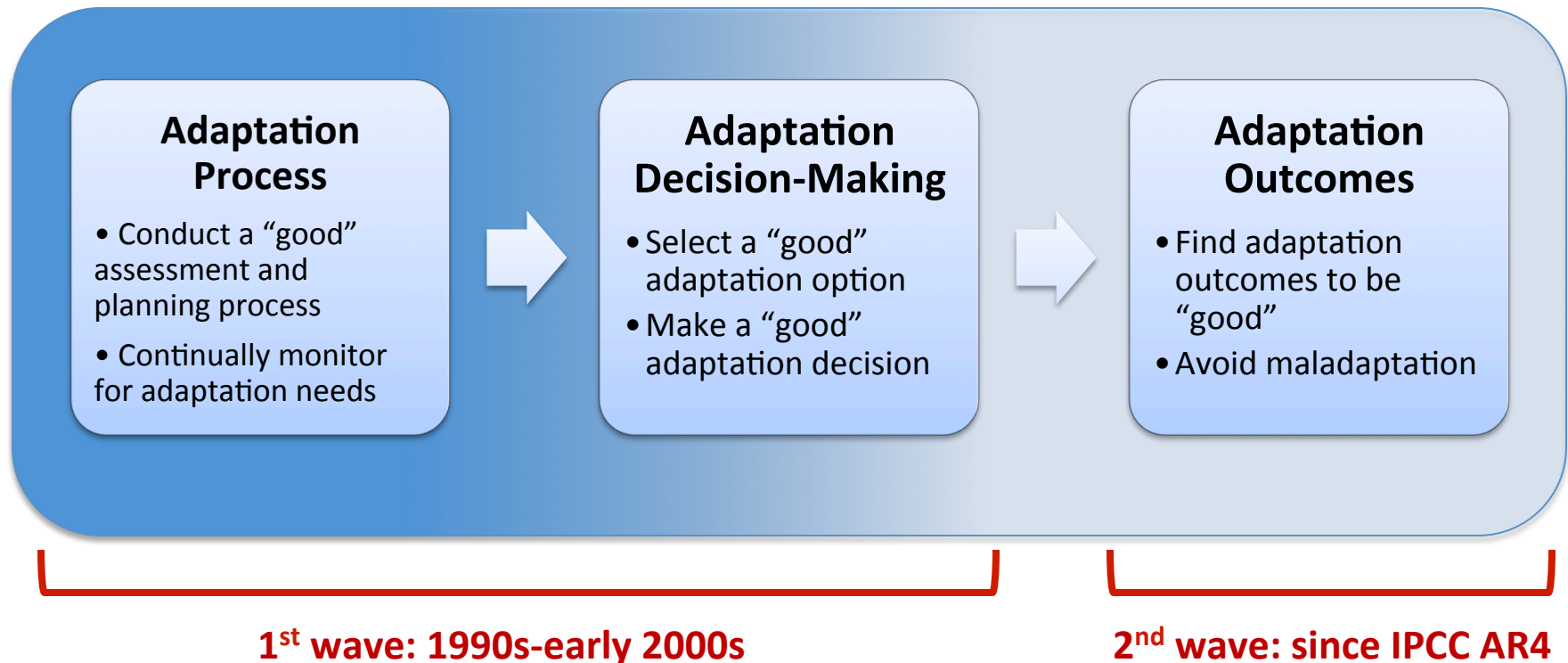
This Raises Some Tough Questions

- How much can science help or is it all subjective and political?
- What is the right scale at which to consider success?
- How and how much do we integrate across sectors?
Across scales or levels of government?
- How do we address trade-offs?
- When can we declare success (or not)?
- How should we measure success?
- Who gets to say?



Dimensions of Adaptation Success

Commonly discussed in the scientific literature



“Success” in the Real World

- Washington State



- Oregon

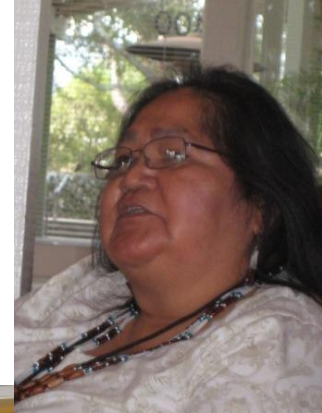


- California



Successful Adaptation to Climate Change on the West Coast

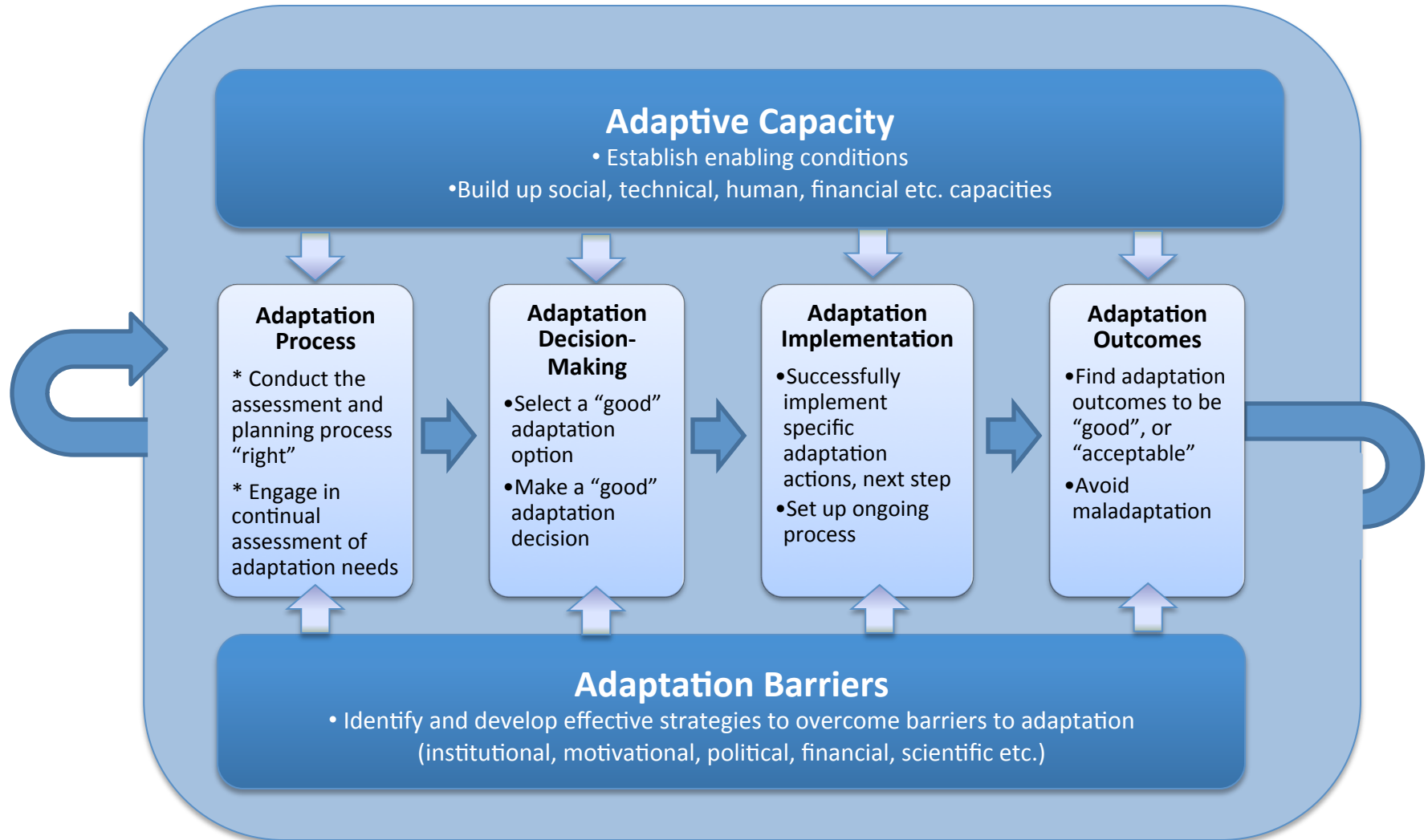
- Pre-workshop interviews with adaptation leaders (“practitioners”)
- Workshop with scientists and practitioners
 - “Fishbowl” of case studies
 - Group discussions
 - In-depth exploration of issues in small groups (process, outcomes, tradeoffs)
 - Evaluation
- Synthesis



Top-Level Findings

- What is “success” depends in part on how you interpret “adaptation” (explicit or implied goals)
- “Success” tends to be more difficult to define than “failure”
- Success is always multi-dimensional
- While there may be positive synergies, often “success” involves trade-offs (across sectors, scales)
- There is no final “success” as adaptation is an evolutionary process > “progress”

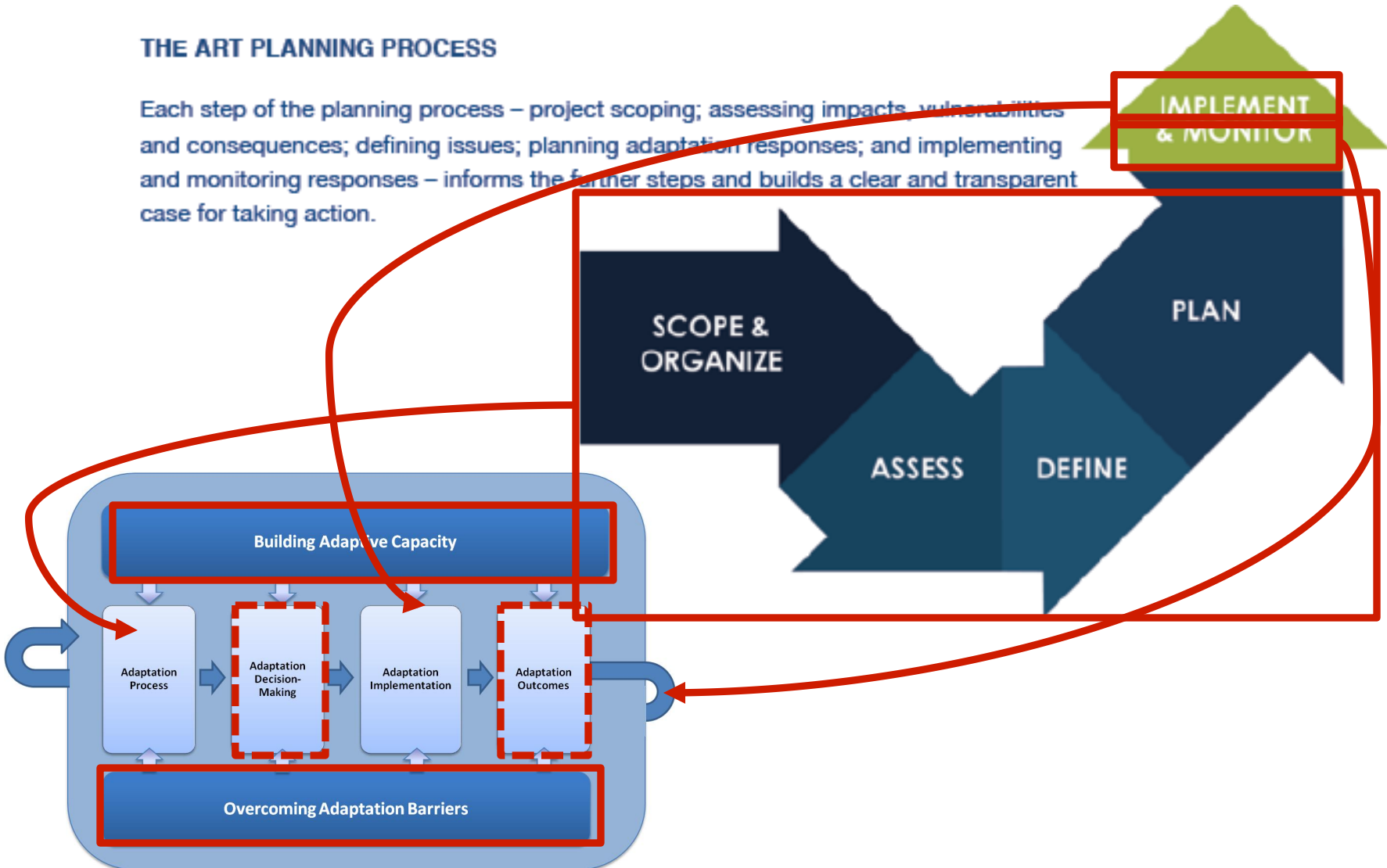
Six Key Dimensions of Adaptation Success



Compared to the ART Approach?

THE ART PLANNING PROCESS

Each step of the planning process – project scoping; assessing impacts, vulnerabilities and consequences; defining issues; planning adaptation responses; and implementing and monitoring responses – informs the further steps and builds a clear and transparent case for taking action.



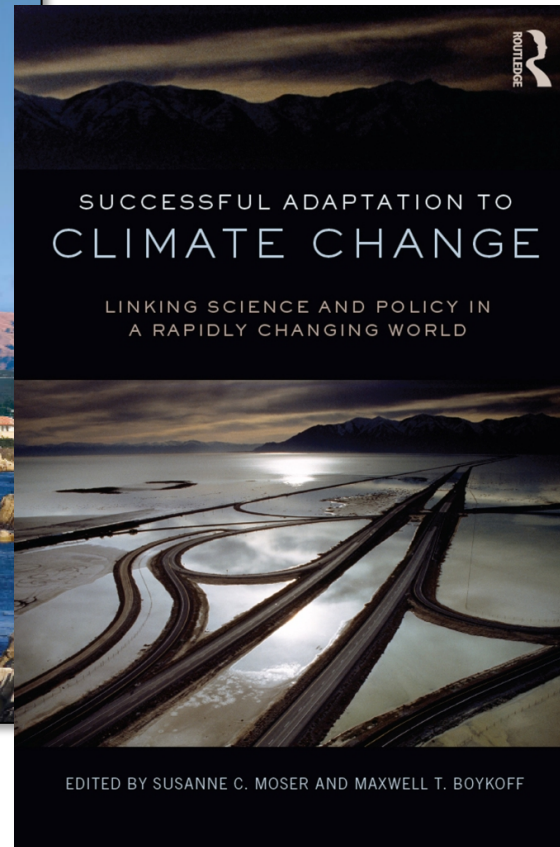
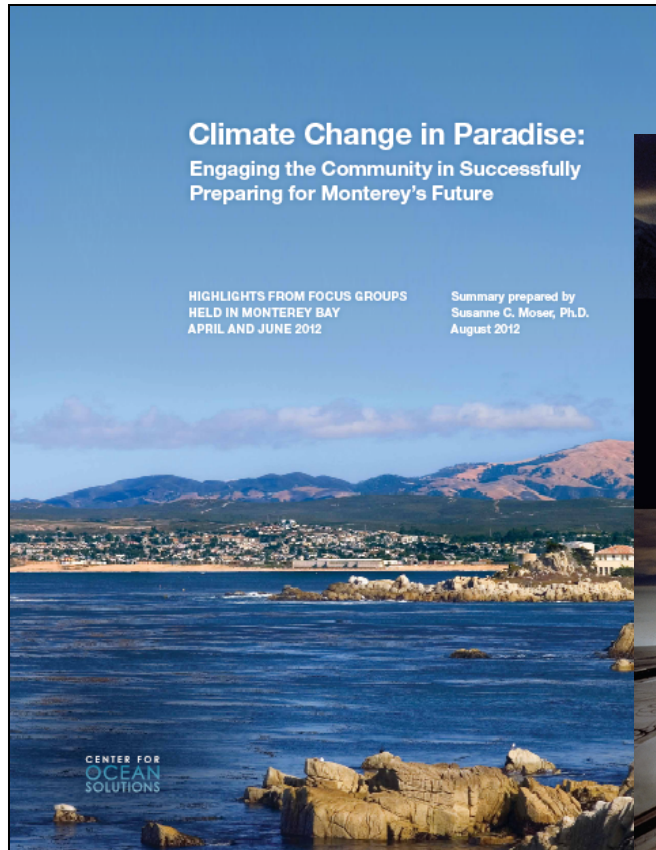
The Rising Call for Indicators and Metrics

- Observations about metrics
 - Tracking progress toward meaningful targets can serve as crucial engine for action/change
 - But:
 - Many measures (even if required) don't get used
 - Many measures don't tell us what we really need to know
 - Ongoing, long-term monitoring is hard to get
 - We don't know how to measure key things that matter

Some Guiding Principles

1. Not single indicators but bundles of indicators will accurately reflect what is/isn't happening
2. Indicators should be purpose-driven (see above)
3. Indicators should be decision-relevant or matter to a decision-maker
4. Focus on a small set of indicators (then test, assess, learn, adjust)
5. Indicators should be developed jointly by “users” and subject-matter experts
6. Indicators should stand in relation to changing conditions

Communicating Adaptation (Success)



Advanced Review

Communicating adaptation to climate change: the art and science of public engagement when climate change comes home

Susanne C. Moser^{1,2*}

This article synthesizes relevant literature and examples from practice to examine what is known to date about communicating climate change adaptation. It explores the language used to discuss adaptation, what is known about resonant frames, drawing on adaptation discourses in policy, practice, and the media. Identifying trends and widely applicable insights is made challenging not only by the variety of words used to speak of adaptation, but by the fact that 'adaptation' language is often not used at all. A broad literature on perceptions and experiences of climate change impacts and how these experiences affect people's valuations and emotional responses to climate change offers crucial insights to the challenges and opportunities in communicating adaptation. It reveals much about people's interest in and acceptability and knowledge of adaptation, about preferred timing and who is thought to be responsible for enacting adaptive actions. Insights from the literature on place attachment and place identity are of particular relevance to public engagement on adaptation as it goes a long way toward explaining the quality of the adaptation debate to date while offering promising opportunities for dialogue. Suggestions for improved adaptation communication practice and critical research gaps are offered. © 2014 John Wiley & Sons, Ltd.

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INTRODUCTION

It has never been easy to communicate climate change. Now, as climate change becomes more than an abstract matter of science, but lived reality instead, it is a good time to ask whether communicating about how we respond to these unfolding impacts will be any easier. As humanity increasingly experiences the troubling consequences of anthropogenic climate change, what is known to date about how to

communicate these impacts and 'adaptances' to them? What do trial-and-error attempts and available research teach us?

This review paper attempts to synthesize a range of relevant insights with the goal of informing both communication research and practice. It rests on several premises. First, there is a rapidly growing need to communicate impacts and adaptation given the unfolding climate realities across the globe, yet communications research specifically focused on adaptation is still in the early stages. One indication of this need is that communication research and related training was identified as the second most frequently mentioned need in 27 U.S. federal agency adaptation plans (noted by 24 of 27 agencies¹). This suggests that communicators involved in adaptation efforts are equipped with little guidance at present, making themselves vulnerable to lost opportunities at best

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All available at: www.susannemoser.com

Communicating Success

Does the Public Have Expectations of “Success”?

- **Something better than what we have**
- **The same as what we have**
- **Tolerable, dignified living conditions**



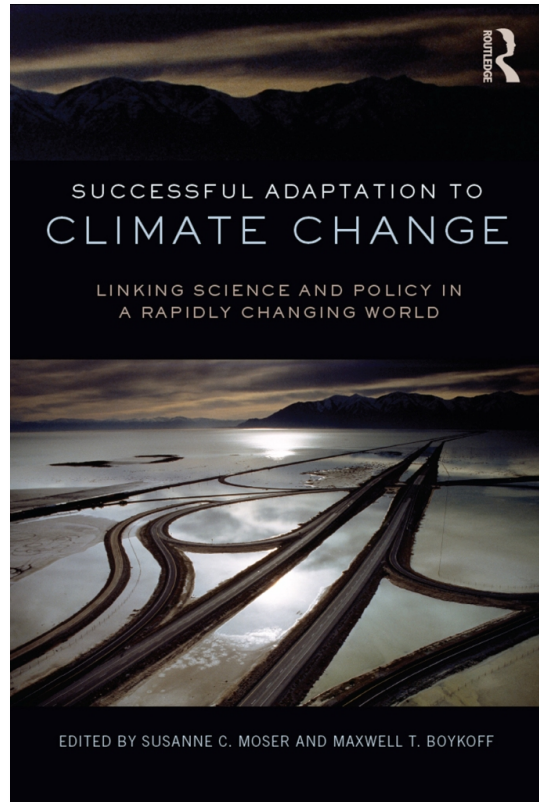
Successful Communication: A “Recipe” for Authentic Hope

- Hope does not require that the future is rosy
- Hope requires that the future (and the outcomes of our actions) are uncertain/not assured
- Staying hopeful = staying actively engaged
- Real hope has six key ingredients:
 1. **Where are we at?** - A realistic assessment of the situation we're in
 2. **What is achievable?** - A vision of a worthwhile outcome
 3. **How can we get there?** - A feasible path from here to there
 4. **What when the going gets tough?** - A strategy for dealing with setbacks and celebrations of interim achievements
 5. **What can I do?** - A meaningful role for individuals in getting there
 6. **What will you do?** - Knowing that we're not going it alone, that we're doing it together with relevant others

Your Comments & Questions



Thank you!



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